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weird but true!

Check out these outrageous facts.

BY JULIE VOSBURGH AGNONE

CHECK OUT THE BOOK!

Porphyrophobia is the fear of **purple.**

You can buy **soap** that smells like **bacon frying.**

A glass eye, three sets of false teeth, and a wig fell into a lake under a **roller coaster** in England.

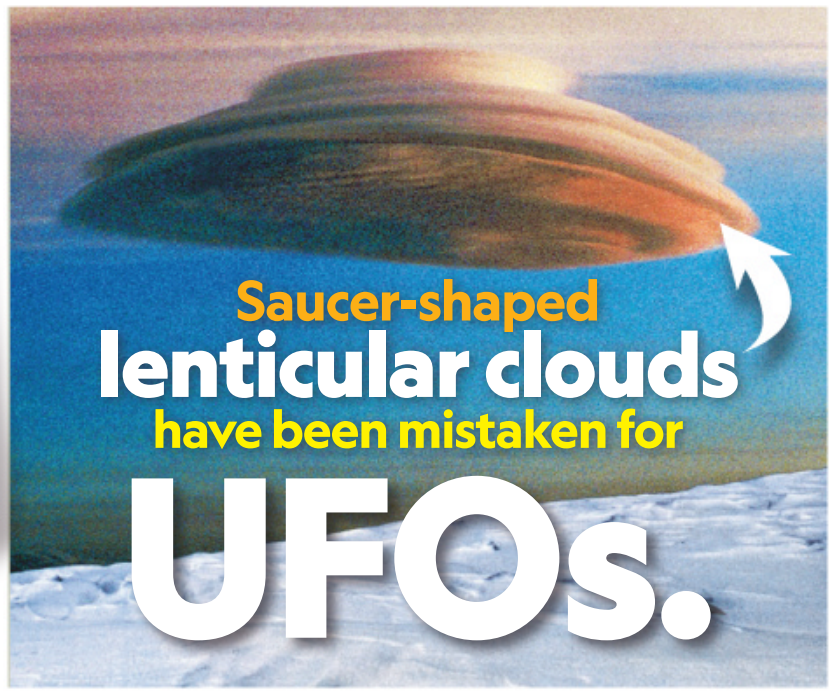
Some sharks can live to be **75 years old.**

People flush about **27,000** trees' worth of **toilet paper** down the **drain** every day.

A **geep** is part **goat,** part **sheep.**

A Norwegian man grew a **17.5-foot-long beard.** That's longer than an ice-cream truck from bumper to bumper.

An Iowa teenager made her **prom dress** out of **chewing-gum wrappers.**



Saucer-shaped **lenticular clouds** have been mistaken for **UFOs.**

SEAN GLADWELL / ALAMY (GLASS EYE); WILDESTANIMAL / SHUTTERSTOCK (SHARK); CREATIVE CROP / GETTY IMAGES (TOILET PAPER); LOMELIND / SHUTTERSTOCK (BLUE TILE); CS333 / SHUTTERSTOCK (GOAT); ERIK LAM / SHUTTERSTOCK (SHEEP); NITO / SHUTTERSTOCK (BEARD BACKGROUND); JAY SUMNER / NG STAFF (GUM AND WRAPPER); MARTINLUBPL / SHUTTERSTOCK (GUM BACKGROUND); MAGRATH / FOLSOM / GETTY IMAGES (CLOUDS)

GUINNESS WORLD RECORDS

BY CHELSEA KATZ

HUGEST DOG EVER

A dog drinking from the kitchen sink might sound weird—unless you're Zeus, the tallest dog ever. About the height of an average five-year-old kid, Zeus needed a lot of water to wash down all his food. Every day the gentle giant ate about 12 cups of dry and two cans of wet dog food, plus chicken or scrambled eggs. If all that food made him sleepy, he just headed to a bedroom to snooze on his own full-size mattress.

FLYING MAN

This is no bird or plane. Fraser Corsan holds the record for the fastest speed in a wingsuit: 246.6 miles an hour! That's faster than some helicopters. A wingsuit has extra material between the arms and legs that increases a skydiver's lift, enabling the daredevil to "fly." Corsan gained speed after jumping from an airplane at above 35,000 feet and eventually parachuted to the ground.

CROWDED CAR

And you thought sardines were squished! Twenty-seven people—including four in the trunk—squeezed into a tiny car to break the record for the most people crammed into a Mini Cooper. So how'd they do it? The participants were all gymnasts, of course! Suddenly that long family road trip doesn't seem so bad after all.

KEVIN SCOTT RAMOS / GUINNESS WORLD RECORDS (ZEUS); GUINNESS WORLD RECORDS (CORSAN); PAUL MICHAEL HUGHES / GUINNESS WORLD RECORDS (CAR). INFORMATION PROVIDED BY © 2019 GUINNESS WORLD RECORDS LIMITED.

Bet You Didn't Know!

6 wacky facts about the world

BY ERIN WHITMER

1 You have to climb a **293-step spiral staircase** to reach the top of the **Leaning Tower of Pisa.**

2 About one-tenth of the **Earth's surface** is covered with **ice.**

3 New Zealand has more **sheep** than **people.**

4 **Australia's Great Barrier Reef** can be seen from **space.**

5 **Death Valley, California,** is the **hottest place** in **North America.**

6 The **Nile River** is **longer** than the distance from **Washington, D.C.,** to **Los Angeles, California.**

BIG WINNERS!

Congratulations to the 2019 winners of the National Geographic Geo Championships: Nihar Janga (right), 14, from Austin, Texas, won the GeoBee; and fifth-graders (from left) Alex Jun, Natanel Rozic, Jeremiah Pierre, and Victor Jimenez, from Flushing, New York, took the top prize in the GeoChallenge with their idea to remove plastic from the Hudson River. Go online to learn more about the Geo Championships.

natgeokids.com/geochampionships

Ask your teacher to register your school for the **2020 Geo Championships** by **December 2019!**

FEDOR SELIVANOV / SHUTTERSTOCK (TOWER); MARK THIESSEN / NG STAFF (GEO CHAMPIONSHIPS)

ALL ABOUT MONEY

BY KRISTIN BAIRD RATTINI

The Perth Mint in Australia once minted a 2.2-pound solid-gold coin worth $62,950.

Peru's currency is named the *nuevo sol,* which is Spanish for "new sun."

Belarus's 50-kapeek note once featured a picture of a squirrel.

A 1922 German banknote is called the "vampire note" because some claim that a vampire is biting the neck of the worker on the bill.

In 1685, soldiers in Quebec, Canada, were paid in playing cards after the French colonial government ran out of money.

Using a metal detector, two English men uncovered 206 Roman coins dating back 2,200 years.

The U.S. Mint employs full-time sculptors to create models for coins.

A $1,000 U.S. banknote from 1890 is nicknamed the "watermelon note" because the design resembles a watermelon's rind.

A minting error on the 2005 Kansas quarter makes the word "trust" look like "rust."

MONEY TIP!

ASK FOR YOUR STORE CHANGE OR ALLOWANCE IN LARGE BILLS. RESEARCH SHOWS PEOPLE ARE LESS LIKELY TO SPEND LARGE BILLS THAN SMALL ONES.

© THE PERTH MINT (GOLD COIN); AFP / GETTY IMAGES (*NUEVO SOL*); SUSAN LAW CAIN / DREAMSTIME (VAMPIRE NOTE); MICHAEL SELEZNEV / ALAMY (SQUIRREL NOTE); DAVID DOTY (PLAYING CARDS); RON NICKEL / DESIGN PICS / CORBIS (ROMAN COINS); COURTESY FEDERAL RESERVE BANK OF SAN FRANCISCO (WATERMELON NOTE); KENNETH MEDEIROS (RUST QUARTER); KELLEY MILLER / NG STAFF (PIGGY BANK)

BY the NUMBERS

BEHIND THE BILLIONS

More than 7 billion people live on Earth.
That sounds like a big number, but just how big is it?
Put it in perspective with these crazy comparisons.

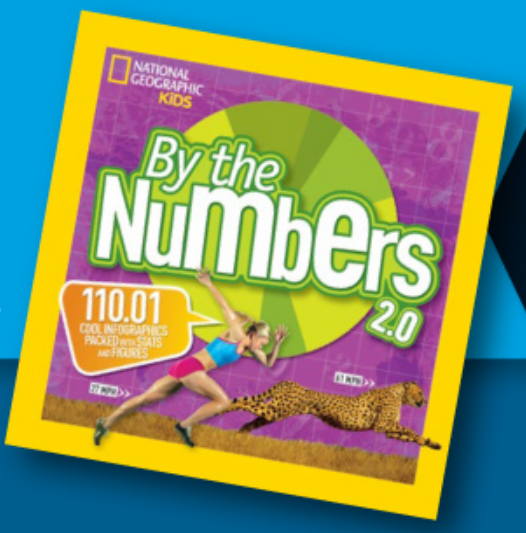
7 BILLION

It would take
200 YEARS
to count to **7 BILLION** out loud.

Standing shoulder to shoulder, all **7 BILLION** of us could fit in the city of Los Angeles, California.

NPETER / SHUTTERSTOCK (EARTH); SANNEBERG / SHUTTERSTOCK (GIRL COUNTING);
PHOTO.UA / SHUTTERSTOCK (LOS ANGELES); PALABRA / SHUTTERSTOCK (CANDY);

BY JULIE BEER AND MICHELLE HARRIS



CHECK OUT THE BOOK!

If you took **7 BILLION** steps, you'd circle the globe

133 TIMES.

It would take nearly 3 Olympic-size swimming pools to hold **7 BILLION** M&Ms.

7 BILLION SECONDS = **222 YEARS**

If you could stack **7 BILLION** people, that tower could reach the moon 27 times.

KATARINAF / SHUTTERSTOCK (FOOTPRINTS); OLLYY / SHUTTERSTOCK (WALKING); QUAOAR / SHUTTERSTOCK (MOON); DOCENT / SHUTTERSTOCK (STOPWATCH)

AMAZING ANIMALS

Pig in Boots!

Thirsk, England

Most pigs love wallowing in the mud. But not Cinders. As a piglet, she refused to walk in mud, sometimes even shaking with fear if she couldn't find a way around a puddle. The solution? Boots!

Owner Andrew Keeble found that doll-size boots were a perfect fit for Cinders. Each day, she'd run to have them put on, then trot happily through the mud. The boots solved the problem but didn't explain her strange actions. Veterinarian Bruce Lawhorn thinks it might have been a behavioral response. "If Cinders had sore hoof pads while walking in mud, she might have associated the pain with the mud," he says.

Eventually Cinders outgrew her boots and began to brave the mud bare-hoofed. But she never wanted to roll around in in the soggy stuff. Getting dirty just wasn't this pig's idea of a good time.

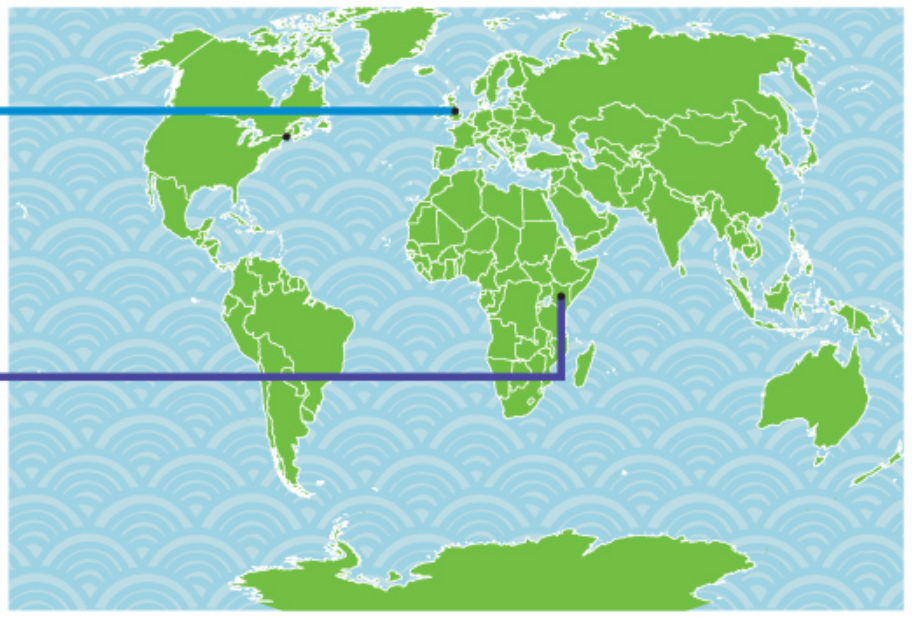
—Heather E. Schwartz

SWNS (CINDERS); MARTIN K. TELEWA / REUTERS (LION AND ORYX)

Adopt-an-Oryx

Samburu National Reserve, Kenya
Kamuniak the lioness was supposed to love baby oryx—as lunch meat. Instead she tried to mother multiple African antelopes. Kamuniak (kuh-moo-NYACK) chased off the mother oryx and protected her "babies" from other predators like leopards and cheetahs. But Kamuniak didn't exactly deserve Mother's Day cards from appreciative animals: The young oryx didn't fare well with a lion "mom." Two of them even managed to escape to their real mothers.

Kamuniak's odd behavior puzzled game wardens and scientists. Lion expert Craig Packer believes she was like a house cat toying with a mouse. "Kamuniak was playful," Packer says. "But I think she got carried away with her game." Others think Kamuniak had so much love to give that any baby would do! —*Pamela S. Turner*



PIG
Thirsk, England

LION AND ORYX
Samburu National Reserve, Kenya

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Weirdest. Cat. Ever.

THE SERVAL MIGHT LOOK STRANGE, BUT THAT'S A GOOD THING WHEN IT COMES TO HUNTING.

BY SCOTT ELDER

A serval sits patiently in a grassy field, swiveling its head back and forth like a watchful owl. The predator is scanning the savanna for a meal not with its eyes, but with its oversize ears.

An unseen rodent stirs under the thick brush, and the wild cat tenses. It crouches on its legs and feet before launching itself up and over the tall grass. Guided only by sound, the serval lands directly on the once-invisible rat.

Thanks to its extra-long legs, stretched-out neck, and huge ears, the serval is sometimes called the "cat of spare parts." The wild cat might look weird to some people. "But put together, their bizarre-looking body parts make them really successful hunters," says Christine Thiel-Bender, a biologist who studies servals in their African home.

In fact, servals catch their prey in over half of their attempts, making them one of the best hunters in the wild cat kingdom. That's about 20 percent better than lions hunting together in a pride. Check out six weird ways servals are the ultimate hunters.

SERVAL KITTENS STAY WITH MOM UP TO TWO YEARS BEFORE LIVING ON THEIR OWN.

Servals can chirp, purr, hiss, snarl, and growl.

SUZI ESZTERHAS / MINDEN PICTURES (KITTEN); FIONAAYERST / GETTY IMAGES (EARS); MARTIN WALZ (MAP)

ALL EARS

The serval's big ears might look silly, but they're key to the animals' hunting success. Servals rely on sound more than any other sense when they're on the prowl. Thanks to their jumbo ears—the biggest of any wild cat's relative to body size—a serval can hear just about any peep on the savanna. (If a person had ears like a serval's, they'd be as big as dinner plates!)

To make the most of their super hearing, servals avoid creating noise while hunting. So instead of stalking prey like some cats do, servals squat in clearings and sit still—sometimes for several hours—as they listen for food. "On a windless day, a quiet serval can hear rodents that are squeaking many feet underground," Thiel-Bender says.

Take our quiz to see how much you know about wild cats. natgeokids.com/september

Serval predators include African wild dogs, hyenas, and leopards.

STICKING THEIR NECKS OUT

When savanna winds drown out the sounds of their prey, servals extend their giraffe-like necks to help them see instead of hear. By craning their necks over the tall grass they're hiding in, the cats can get a better look at their prey.

A serval's neck also helps it pinpoint its pounce. If a serval can only hear its prey, the cat will leap toward the noise. It can then use its neck (which is part of its extra-flexible spine) to adjust its direction midair after it's finally gotten a look at its food. The moment before landing, soaring servals tilt their necks down to get a better glimpse of their target and position their front paws for impact. Most of the time they stick the landing, finishing the prey instantly.

Servals vs. Ocelots

Servals and ocelots are both small, solitary, nocturnal hunters. Take a look at other ways these wild cats stack up.

	WHERE THEY LIVE
SERVALS	Grassy savanna and wetlands in parts of northwest Africa and much of sub-Saharan Africa
OCELOTS	Tropical forests, shrub-lands, and grasslands in South, Central, and North America

FEDERICO VERONESI / GETTY IMAGES (NECK); DENIS-HUOT / MINDEN PICTURES (LEG); OLE JORGEN LIODDEN / MINDEN PICTURES (TAIL); MARTIN HARVEY / GETTY IMAGES (SERVAL); PETE OXFORD / MINDEN PICTURES (OCELOT)

A LEG UP

Once a serval's ears have pinpointed prey, their long legs jump in to help catch dinner. "Servals look small and delicate," Thiel-Bender says, "but they're incredibly agile cats." Their legs—the longest of any cat when compared to overall size—give them a lot of power. A three-foot-long serval can leap 13 feet horizontally to pounce on a rat, no running start necessary. They can also rocket themselves nine feet up in the air to swipe a bird. That's like you jumping nearly 21 feet high, as tall as an adult giraffe!

The sneaky cat's ability to pounce from far away means unsuspecting prey won't hear its footsteps or detect its scent. "Most prey don't even know the serval is coming until they've been caught," Thiel-Bender says.

Full-grown servals weigh between 20 and 40 pounds.

TINY TAILS

Big ears, long legs, and long necks ... it would make sense for a serval to have a superlong tail, right? But they don't! Long tails help animals like red pandas keep their balance in their tree homes. They're also important for animals that run longer distances, like cheetahs, to control their steering while sprinting. Servals do none of that. In fact, a long tail would get in the way of their leaping abilities, so a shorter tail actually helps them survive.

HOW THEY HUNT	FOODS THEY LOVE	COAT NOTES	THEIR NEIGHBORS	STATUS
Wait in tall grass listening for prey to pounce on; can swim, but rarely do.	Rodents, small birds, and amphibians; they almost never scavenge, or eat other animals' leftovers.	Golden fur with varied black spots	Lions, leopards, cheetahs, hyenas	Least concern, population stable; exploited by exotic pet trade and fur hunters
Stalk primarily by sight and smell before chasing prey; often swim for food.	Rodents, plus bigger prey like monkeys; they regularly scavenge.	Tan to reddish-brown fur with dark rosettes (rose-like markings)	Jaguars, cougars, anacondas	Least concern, but population decreasing due to habitat loss

CHECK OUT MORE FUN FACTS ABOUT THE OCELOT.
natgeokids.com/september

STRIPES *AND* SPOTS—SORT OF

Almost every wild cat relies on its coat for camouflage as they stalk prey and avoid predators. Cats like cheetahs sport spots, while others, such as tigers, wear stripes. Servals have both—kind of. While they don't have actual stripes, some of their larger spots blend together to give them the appearance of stripes. "It's tough to find a serval in high grass when it's standing still," Thiel-Bender says. "Their mixed-pattern coat is harder to see than a single-pattern coat."

No two serval coats are the same. In fact, servals that live near woodlands have more dots that are small than those cats that spend time on the savanna; scientists think the smaller spots might hide those cats better among the shade of trees. However, white spots behind an adults' ears are *supposed* to be seen—they help cubs keep track of Mom.

Some ancient Egyptians kept servals as pets.

SERVALS CAN CATCH UP TO 30 FROGS IN THREE HOURS WHILE HUNTING IN WATER.

Servals are solitary animals—except mothers that are raising babies.

BONUS: NOT-SO-FANCY FEAST

OK, a diet isn't a weird body part, but servals definitely have odd tastes that help them survive. These cats mostly dine on rodents—on average, one serval eats 4,000 a year—but they're not picky eaters like some other wild cats. "Servals will eat anything small enough for them to catch," says Thiel-Bender, who's examined the contents of serval poop. "I was surprised to find grasshoppers and snakes, as well as rodents. Other cats don't typically eat such a wide variety of animals." Servals also often eat birds, from small ones like weavers to larger storks and guinea fowls. They'll even wade into water to gobble up frogs and other amphibians.

Also unlike most other wild cats, servals turn up their noses at other predators' leftovers. "It's probably because they're already such successful hunters," Thiel-Bender says. "They don't need to go looking for another animal's meal."

MARY MCDONALD / MINDEN PICTURES (STRIPES AND SPOTS); GERARD LACZ / SCIENCE SOURCE (BONUS: NOT-SO-FANCY FEAST); KEITHSZAFRANSKI / GETTY IMAGES (MARGAY); SEBASTIAN KENNERKNECHT / MINDEN PICTURES (GEOFFROY'S CAT); ROD WILLIAMS / MINDEN PICTURES (ASIATIC WILDCAT); EDO SCHMIDT / ALAMY STOCK PHOTO (SAND CAT) ; GMBH / ALAMY (ASIATIC GOLDEN CAT);

MORE COOL CATS!

Shy and rarely seen, many of the world's smallest wild cats are experts at avoiding attention. Check out some of these lesser known felines caught on camera.

MARGAY

Margays, native to Central and South America, can climb headfirst down a tree.

GEOFFROY'S CAT

Excellent swimmers, Geoffroy's cats are often spotted crossing some of South America's fastest-moving streams and rivers.

SAND CAT

Sand cats live in the deserts of North Africa and the Middle East. Thick fur on their paws protect them from the hot sand and helps them walk without sinking.

ASIATIC WILDCAT

Asiatic wildcats—native to several countries in South Asia—are often spotted hiding in abandoned rock crevices or burrows built by other animals.

ASIATIC GOLDEN CAT

Asiatic golden cats are known as fire tigers in the Southeast Asian countries of Myanmar and Thailand.

RUSTY-SPOTTED CAT

India and Sri Lanka's rusty-spotted cat is about one foot long (not including its tail) and weighs three pounds.

JAGUARUNDI

Jaguarundis—native to southern North America, Central America, and South America—can make at least 13 distinct calls, more than most other wild cats.

PERSONALITY QUIZ: WHICH WILD CAT ARE YOU?
natgeokids.com/september

JIRI VACLAVEK / SHUTTERSTOCK (RUSTY-SPOTTED CAT); PARDOFELIS PHOTOGRAPHY / ALAMY (JAGUARUNDI). REINHARD DIRSCHERL / ALAMY (CROCODILE, PAGES 18-19)

NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC KiDS

The saltwater crocodile is one of the most dangerous reptiles in the world.

These crocs "bark" to communicate.

Adult male saltwater crocs can grow to be over 20 feet long.

Salties can travel long distances by "surfing" ocean currents.

ALL-BLING EDITION

Real or FAKE?

DON'T BE FOOLED! CHECK OUT THESE HACKS TO LEARN IF YOUR TREASURES ARE FOR REAL. BY ROSE DAVIDSON

DIAMONDS OR DUDS?

People used to believe that diamonds were made by bolts of lightning! That *sounds* really cool—but it's not true: Diamonds actually develop deep in the ground under great pressure. The gems are the crystalline form of carbon. A cubic zirconia—sometimes called a CZ—is another form of crystalline material that happens to look like a diamond. But it's worth a lot less.

The easiest way to tell a diamond from a CZ imposter is with something called the fog test. Here's how it works: Breathe a puff of air on the diamond in question. If the fog disappears right away, congrats! It's probably a diamond. But if it takes longer to go away, you might have a CZ on your hands. Fog doesn't show up on real diamonds because the stones conduct heat so well that the fog evaporates instantly.

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TRAVISMANLEY / CAN STOCK PHOTO INC (AQUAMARINES, ALL); MARISABELL / CAN STOCK PHOTO INC. (GARNETS, CITRINES, ALL); WATCHARIN S / SHUTTERSTOCK (DIAMOND SWAN); ANCH / SHUTTERSTOCK (PEARLS); BRENDAN SMIALOWSKI / AFP / GETTY IMAGES (CASH); TITIMA ONGKANTONG / SHUTTERSTOCK (SILVER); CAROLYN FRANKS / SHUTTERSTOCK (GOLD)

PROPER PEARLS

People have come up with countless ways to imitate pearls, whether it's with painted beads or waxed glass. So how can you tell a real pearl from an imposter? One way to put a pearl to the test is with your teeth. Gently rub the pearl against your tooth. If it's real, the pearl will feel gritty. (Fake ones usually feel super smooth.)

Using your fingernails works too. If you're only able to produce a bit of powder from scratching the pearl, it's the real thing. Scratching at a fake pearl long enough will reveal the artificial layer underneath. (But don't do this without permission!)

COLD, HARD CASH—OR BOGUS BILLS?

Want to make sure that a hundred-dollar bill is the real deal? The newest U.S. hundreds have tons of features to distinguish them from counterfeits. For instance, if you hold the note under an ultraviolet light, you should see the blue ribbon running down the middle of the bill begin to glow pink. Or you can try moving the bill back and forth to make sure the blue ribbon changes its imagery from little bells to tiny "100s." As it moves, you should also see color-shifting ink on parts of the bill go from copper to green.

SERIOUS SILVER

If you've got a questionable chunk of silver, consider the ice test. Grab a large ice cube from the freezer. Put it on top of the metal, then keep your eyes on the ice's reaction. If it starts to melt immediately, the silver's probably real. That's because real silver conducts heat way better than fakes, which might melt the ice at a much slower rate.

GOT GOLD?

To find out if your gold will make you rich or deserves a gold medal in trickery, try wearing it for a while. If your skin turns black or green where the metal touched it, then sorry: Your gold is phony.

Another way to tell if you've got fake gold is with the float test. Place your gold object into a glass or bowl of water—real gold should sink to the bottom of the cup, while fake gold is more likely to float.

Keep Earth WiLD

Newborn giant pandas are about the size of a stick of butter.

A Nat Geo photographer gives you a behind-the-scenes look at his quest to save animals.

BY ALLYSON SHAW | PHOTOGRAPHS BY JOEL SARTORE

Joel Sartore has squealed like a pig, protected his camera from a parakeet, and suffered through a stink attack—all to help save animals through photography. "I hope people will look these animals in their eyes and then be inspired to protect them," says Sartore, a National Geographic photographer.

Sartore is on a mission to take pictures of all 12,000 animal species living in captivity through his project, the National Geographic Photo Ark. During each photo shoot, he works with zookeepers, aquarists, and wildlife rehabbers to keep his subjects safe and comfortable. But things can still get a little, well, wild! Read on for some of Sartore's most memorable moments.

Photographer Joel Sartore uses black or white backgrounds because he wants the focus to be on only the animals. That way a mouse is as important as an elephant.

Moment of HA

Some arctic fox dens are 300 years old.

ARCTIC FOX, *native to the Arctic regions of Eurasia, North America, Greenland, and Iceland*

Great Bend Brit Spaugh Zoo, Great Bend, Kansas

"Todd the arctic fox wanted to sniff everything, but he was moving too quickly for me to get a good picture. I needed to do something surprising to get his attention, so I squealed like a pig! The weird sound made the fox stop, sit down, and tilt his head as if he were thinking, What's the matter with you? Good thing I was fast, because the pig noise only worked once. The next time I squealed, Todd completely ignored me."

NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC PHOTO ARK JOEL SARTORE

BY THE NUMBERS

Joel Sartore is on a mission to photograph each and every animal species in captivity—all 12,000 of them. Here's how he's doing.

Species photographed: More than 9,850

Institutions visited: 450

Countries visited: 50

Time spent so far: 13 years

Cameras used: At least 15

Moment of SNOOZE

GIANT PANDAS, *native to China*

Zoo Atlanta, Atlanta, Georgia

These giant pandas were just a few months old when I put the football-size twins in a small, white photo tent and snapped a few pics as they tumbled on top of each other. But the youngsters were tiring out, and I knew I was losing my chance to get a memorable photo before they drifted off to sleep. One cub put his head on the back of the other, and I managed to capture an awesome shot just seconds before the two cubs fell asleep.

A single colony of gray-headed flying foxes can include a million bats.

Moment of YAY

GRAY-HEADED FLYING FOX, *native to southeastern Australia*

Australian Bat Clinic, Advancetown, Australia

When I arrived at the clinic, I was amazed to see all sorts of bats just hanging from laundry racks all over the rescue center. They sleepily watched me as I walked through the room and asked a staff member for a friendly flying fox to photograph. She scooped up a sweet bat and placed its feet on a wire rack in front of my backdrop. The calm bat didn't seem to mind being in front of the camera. The best part? This clinic rehabilitates bats that have torn their wings, and my subject was eventually released back into the wild.

Moment of EW

PALAWAN STINK BADGER, *native to the Philippines*

Avilon Zoo, Rizal, Philippines

Palawan stink badgers also use their scent to mark their territory.

This stink badger really earned her name. Right after walking into the photo enclosure, she lifted her tail and released globs of smelly goo from her rear end. It was like a skunk smell, but much worse. (Since these animals are a bit slow, the stinky smell is their best defense against predators.) We took the photos as fast as we could, and then the zoo staff treated her to some extra worms. But I made a big mistake in photographing her first that day. The binturong that I was supposed to shoot next took one whiff, walked out, and refused to come into the photo enclosure the rest of the day.

YOU CAN HELP TOO! Go online to get more info on Photo Ark and learn how you can make a difference. **natgeokids.com/photo-ark**

JOEL SARTORE / NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC PHOTO ARK / NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC IMAGE COLLECTION (ALL)

Moment of AW

BORNEAN ORANGUTAN, *native to Borneo, an island in Southeast Asia*

Avilon Zoo, Rizal, Philippines

I knew Trixie was special when she walked into the room holding her keeper's hand. Since this orangutan grew up with her keepers, she was totally relaxed around us. I pointed to the corner of the room where I wanted to do the photo shoot, and Trixie walked right over. Then she lay down and looked at me through the lens of the camera. I felt like she could understand everything I said, so I just told her to strike a pose. As you can see, she did it perfectly.

Red-masked parakeets sometimes nest in mounds made by termites.

Orangutans sleep in giant nests they create in the forest canopy.

More WILDNESS!

Photo Ark spotlights all kinds of animals. Meet some of Joel Sartore's strangest subjects.

BUDGETT'S FROG

Native to Argentina, Bolivia, and Paraguay

Baltimore Aquarium, Baltimore, Maryland

ORANGE SPOTTED FILEFISH

Native to Indo-West Pacific Ocean

Henry Doorly Zoo and Aquarium, Omaha, Nebraska

MEDITERRANEAN RED BUG

Native to the Mediterranean region

Graham's Quinta dos Malvedos Vineyard, Portugal

NORTH AMERICAN PORCUPINE

Native to North America

Nebraska Wildlife Rehab, Omaha, Nebraska

* *The critter above is a rare albino porcupine!*

18+

WHAT IS AVAXHOME?

AVAXHOME-

the biggest Internet portal, providing you various content: brand new books, trending movies, fresh magazines, hot games, recent software, latest music releases.

Unlimited satisfaction one low price
Cheap constant access to piping hot media
Protect your downloadings from Big brother
Safer, than torrent-trackers

18 years of seamless operation and our users' satisfaction

All languages
Brand new content
One site

AVXLIVE.ICU

AvaxHome - Your End Place

We have everything for all of your needs. Just open https://avxlive.icu

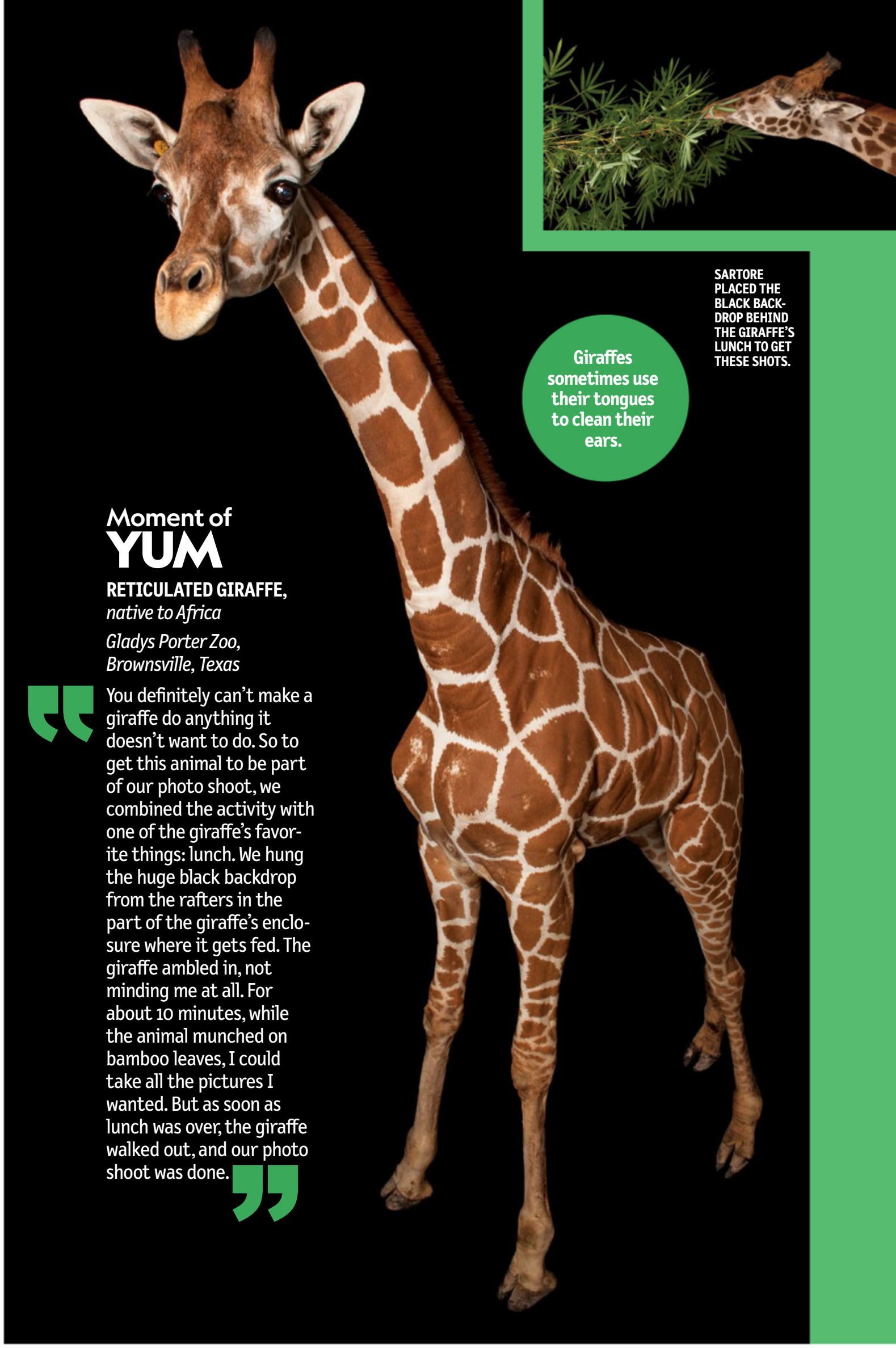
Moment of WOW

RED-MASKED PARAKEET,
native to Ecuador and Peru

Kamla Nehru Zoological Garden, Ahmedabad, India

Parakeets are loud, active, supersmart birds. When I brought this red-masked parakeet into the photo tent, he first climbed up on the equipment and nibbled at my lens. But then something caught the bird's eye: his own reflection in the camera lens. The bird didn't try to fight the reflection, so I thought maybe he understood he was looking at himself, or perhaps at another bird he knew wasn't a threat. Instead, he posed for the camera! I felt like the smart bird could tell I was there to take his picture and help him.

ALAOTRA REED LEMUR
Native to Madagascar
Plzeň Zoo, Plzeň, Czech Republic



SARTORE PLACED THE BLACK BACKDROP BEHIND THE GIRAFFE'S LUNCH TO GET THESE SHOTS.

Giraffes sometimes use their tongues to clean their ears.

Moment of YUM

RETICULATED GIRAFFE,
native to Africa

Gladys Porter Zoo, Brownsville, Texas

You definitely can't make a giraffe do anything it doesn't want to do. So to get this animal to be part of our photo shoot, we combined the activity with one of the giraffe's favorite things: lunch. We hung the huge black backdrop from the rafters in the part of the giraffe's enclosure where it gets fed. The giraffe ambled in, not minding me at all. For about 10 minutes, while the animal munched on bamboo leaves, I could take all the pictures I wanted. But as soon as lunch was over, the giraffe walked out, and our photo shoot was done.

WANT MORE MOMENT OF YUM? Check out some supercute animals chowing down. **natgeokids.com/september**

FROM THE PAGES OF

EXPLORER ACADEMY

THE DOUBLE HELIX

BY TRUDI TRUEIT

In this excerpt from Explorer Academy: The Double Helix, *Cruz and his classmates are attending a party. The CAVE, or Computer Animated Virtual Experience simulator, has virtually morphed their ordinary-looking classrooms on the ship into a haunted house. A blindfolded Cruz is playing a game in which he must identify virtual but touchable (also called holo-thermal) versions of everyday objects using only his hands. He's all alone in the game room ... or is he?*

Explorer Academy student Cruz Coronado is on a globe-trotting mission aboard the ship *Orion*. A shady company called Nebula has been tracking the 12-year-old to steal a formula developed by his dead mother—and they'll do anything to get it from him.

Cruz dipped his fingertips into the box until he felt something soft. Cold. Squishy. He slid his hand along the slimy surface, just to be sure, then closed the top.

"Spaghetti noodles," he said clearly.

He waited. Would something pop up to tell him if he was right or wrong?

Hm. The instructions had said if he was right he would get to continue, so either the box would open again for him or it wouldn't, right?

Cruz reached for the lid. It opened. He put his hand inside.

"Candy corn."

SCOTT PLUMBE (MAIN ILLUSTRATION); ДМИТРИЙ УДОВИЧЕНКО / DREAMSTIME. (BOOK PAGE BACKGROUND); ANTONIO JAVIER CAPARO (BOOK COVER ART)

As he continued, the items got harder to figure out. Popcorn. Sliced olives. Flower petals.

He was lifting the lid again when he felt something on his shoulder—a hand.

"Don't move," said a digitized voice.

"O-okay."

"Do not speak until you are told," demanded the voice.

Cruz let his hand drop from the box. He slipped it inside the pocket of his shorts, his palm closing around a baseball-size orb. The octopod was a defensive weapon that Fanchon [the tech lab chief at Explorer Academy] had created for him. Press one of the blue rings and the ball released a spray that temporarily paralyzed an attacker.

"Talk!" ordered the digital voice. "You have 10 seconds."

"Talk to who?" Cruz asked in confusion.

"Cruz?" said a familiar voice.

"Dad!"

"I'm here, son." His dad was on the phone. Cruz could feel it being held next to his ear.

"Are you okay?" shouted Cruz.

"I'm fine," said his dad. "Are you all right?"

"Yes. I'm on *Orion*. Don't worry. We'll—"

"Cruz, whatever you do, don't—"

The line went dead.

"Dad? *Dad?*"

"Your father will be released when we have what we want," said the voice.

Someone was grabbing the collar of Cruz's shirt. He felt a gloved hand probing the back of his neck.

"Where is it?" demanded the voice.

"What?" asked Cruz, sliding the octopod upward, out of his pocket.

"The cipher. Where's the cipher?"

Cruz froze.

"I won't ask again," snapped the voice. "Where is the formula?"

"You ... you didn't think I'd bring it with me, did you?" Cruz sputtered.

There was a pause, confirming that's exactly what the gloved person thought.

Somehow, Nebula had discovered Cruz's secret—that he wore pieces of his mother's secret cipher around his neck.

Another hand was on his neck, this one sliding around his throat. As the glove tightened, Cruz's pulse raced.

He thrust his elbow back as hard as he could. He heard a yelp. Fingers slid from his throat.

Pulling the blindfold down over his mouth with his left hand, Cruz spun and raised his arm. He squeezed, sending a mist over a black mask covered in red jewels. A caped figure doubled over and began to cough.

Cruz kept the black blindfold clamped to his mouth so he didn't accidentally inhale the spray. He sped for the door, flung it open, and ran smack into Sailor.

"Nebula ..." he gasped.

She hit her comm pin. "Sailor York to security. We need help!"

Dugan was coming toward them. "Is that the mystery-box room?"

"Yes, but you can't go in," snapped Sailor.

Dugan went for the doorknob. "The light's not on. Taryn said I could go in if the light was off."

"No!" Cruz reached for Dugan. "Somebody dangerous ... in there—"

Jerking free of Cruz's grip, Dugan opened the door and slipped inside. A few seconds later, he poked his head out.

"Whatever joke you're playing, it's not funny."

"What do you mean?" asked Cruz.

"There's nobody in here."

Sailor and Cruz peered in.

Dugan was right ... the room was empty.

WIN THE BOOK!
TRY ONLINE AUGUST 13-20.
natgeokids.com/september

Will Cruz figure out who the masked person was—and can he rescue his dad before it's too late? Check out

EXPLORER ACADEMY: THE DOUBLE HELIX

to find out!

FUN STUFF

GAMES, LAUGHS, AND LOTS TO DO!

BY TRACEY WEST AND GARETH MOORE

SPECIAL EXPLORER ACADEMY SECTION

In the new book *Explorer Academy: The Double Helix,* 12-year-old Cruz Coronado attends an exclusive school where he learns how to be an explorer. Join the adventure by helping Cruz solve the puzzles in the next few pages. Then keep cracking codes at **ExplorerAcademy.com**.

FIND THE SPY!

Dangerous villains are following Cruz. Use the clues below and the Academy campus map to find this mysterious spy. ANSWER ON PAGE 33

CLUES

1. The spy is hiding somewhere **northward** of the Franklin Library.
2. The spy is hiding somewhere **northeast** of Bingham Auditorium.
3. The spy is hiding in a building that is **smaller** than the CAVE.
4. The spy is hiding in a building that has a **curved** side.
5. The spy is hiding in a building that is **bordered** by more than one tree.

The spy is hiding in _____.

ANSWER

// TIP FROM EMMETT //

When you're solving a logic puzzle, eliminate the options that don't fit the rules at each step. That way, you can narrow down the possibilities until you're left with only one.

SCOTT PLUMBE (EMMETT ART, CAMPUS ART); ROB HYRONS / SHUTTERSTOCK (BINOCULARS), RTIMAGES / SHUTTERSTOCK (WORLD MAP), IMAGE DIGITALLY COMPOSED; EILEEN TWEEDY / REX / SHUTTERSTOCK (GOLD CIPHER, ALL)

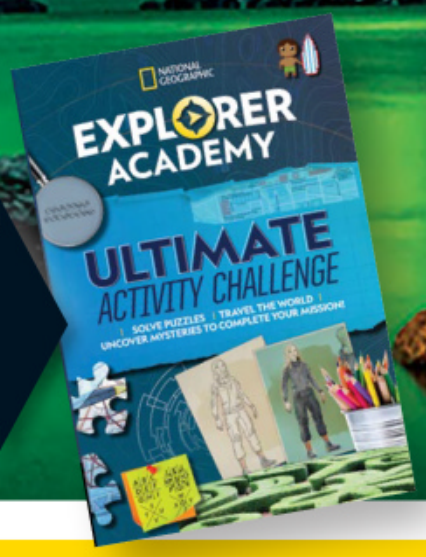
LAND OF ICE AND SNOW

Students at Explorer Academy travel the world, including Iceland, to learn how to become explorers. Search for the names of some of the natural and historical wonders on this island country in the North Atlantic. (In order to make this word search more challenging, we've left the accent marks off of Langjökull and Reykjavík.)

ANSWERS ON PAGE 33

O	I	E	P	R	G	S	R	G	S	G	N	A	S	S
W	B	S	S	G	N	I	R	P	S	T	O	H	T	N
A	L	R	K	R	E	F	J	O	R	D	S	H	G	I
T	A	E	I	S	R	E	S	Y	E	G	G	L	L	L
E	C	I	V	K	D	S	F	Y	E	I	L	L	A	V
R	K	C	A	R	B	L	A	E	L	O	U	K	O	O
F	S	A	J	J	E	L	E	N	Y	K	E	L	S	P
A	A	L	K	A	S	E	R	I	O	S	C	E	U	A
L	N	G	Y	D	O	E	D	J	F	A	Y	F	N	K
L	D	E	E	G	H	K	G	N	N	A	F	L	R	P
S	T	S	R	T	C	N	O	O	I	I	V	N	E	S
L	E	S	R	K	A	J	E	R	N	E	O	A	E	U
N	E	O	R	L	L	S	R	S	I	R	R	V	L	R
F	N	T	H	E	B	L	U	E	L	A	G	O	O	N
G	H	N	L	K	S	S	O	F	L	L	U	G	R	F

BLACK SAND
FJORDS
GEYSERS
GLACIERS
GULLFOSS
HOT SPRINGS
LAKES
LANGJOKULL
LAVA FIELDS
NORTHERN LIGHTS
PUFFINS
REINDEER
REYKJAVIK
THE BLUE LAGOON
VOLCANOES
WATERFALLS


NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC
EXPLORER ACADEMY
ULTIMATE ACTIVITY CHALLENGE
SOLVE PUZZLES | TRAVEL THE WORLD | UNCOVER MYSTERIES TO COMPLETE YOUR MISSION!

FOLLOW ALONG ON CRUZ'S ADVENTURE AND SOLVE MORE PUZZLES IN THIS BOOK!

Glaciers cover almost 11 percent of the land in Iceland, where glacier hiking and ice climbing are popular sports.

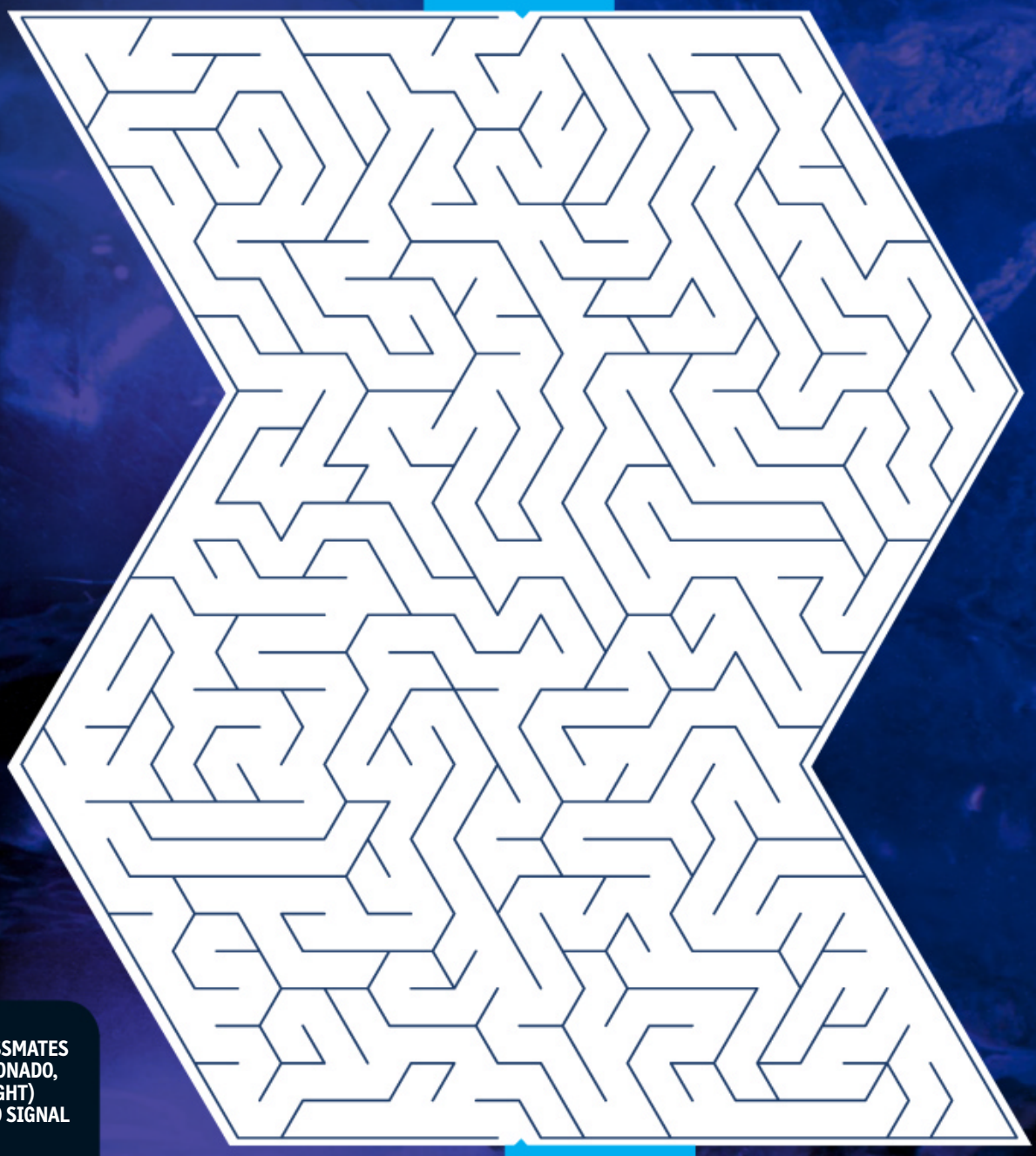
JAMEN PERCY / DREAMSTIME (NORTHERN LIGHTS BACKGROUND); DERGRIZA / SHUTTERSTOCK (FLAG)

CAVE CONUNDRUM

While exploring the ice caves of Iceland, the students get lost in a glacier. Help them find their way out.

ANSWER ON PAGE 33

START



FINISH

TRAPPED IN AN ICE CAVE, CLASSMATES SAILOR YORK (LEFT), CRUZ CORONADO, AND BRYNDIS JÓNSDÓTTIR (RIGHT) GATHER THEIR TECHNOLOGY TO SIGNAL FOR HELP.

CHECK OUT THE BOOK!

SCOTT PLUMBE (ICE CAVE ART)

ANCIENT NUMBERS

Dr. Archer Luben is an archaeologist and substitute archaeology teacher at the Academy. He explains that the ancient Egyptians used a writing system made up of symbols called hieroglyphs, which could represent objects, concepts, and numbers.

The number system was based on multiples of 10. So to write the number 3, the Egyptians would write the hieroglyph for "1" three times. Or to write the number 20, they would use the hieroglyph for "10" two times.

1 =

10 =

100 =

1,000 =

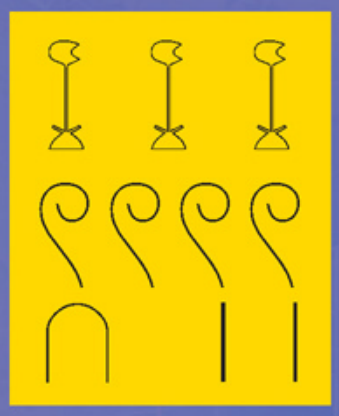
10,000 =

100,000 =

1,000,000 =

« The hieroglyphs looked like this.

So the number 3,412 could be written like this. »



CRACK THIS CODE!

Using your knowledge of ancient Egyptian hieroglyphs, decode the following numbers. Then sort the numbers from highest to lowest. Finally, place the letters in the white boxes according to the numerical order. ANSWERS ON PAGE 33

D S N O B

Write the numbers here!

12 _____ _____ _____ _____ _____

A P R Y O

_____ _____ _____ _____ _____

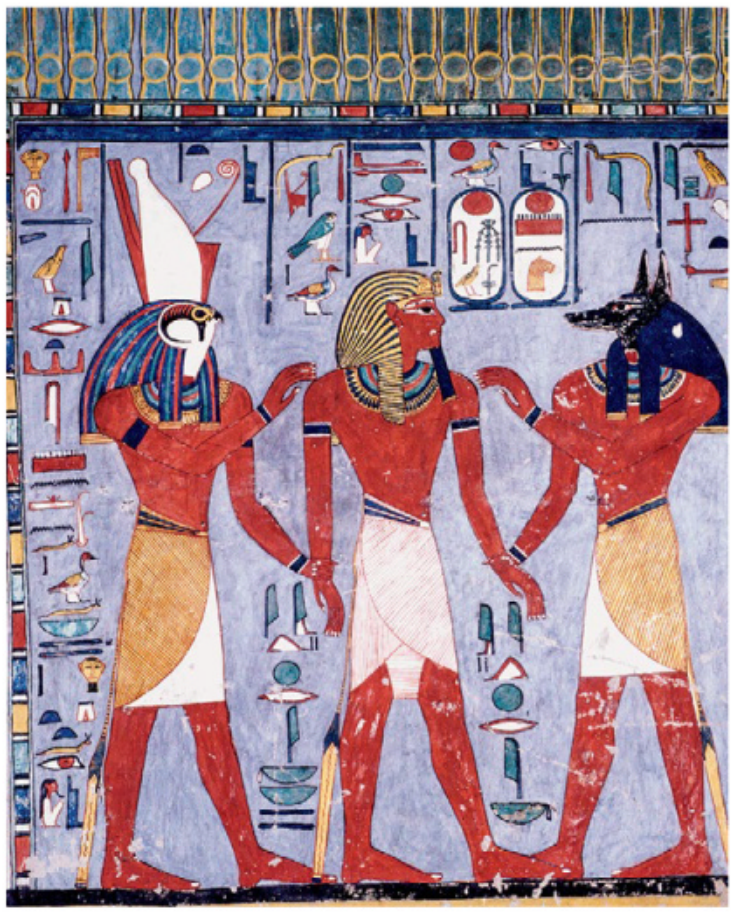
Write the letters here!

VADIM SADOVSKI / SHUTTERSTOCK (SCROLL); WHITE SNOW / SHUTTERSTOCK (BACKGROUND)

HIDDEN RELICS

Dr. Luben is showing the recruits images from a pharaoh's tomb—but the picture on the right has 15 differences from the one on the left. Can you spot them all? Circle the ones you find.

ANSWERS BELOW



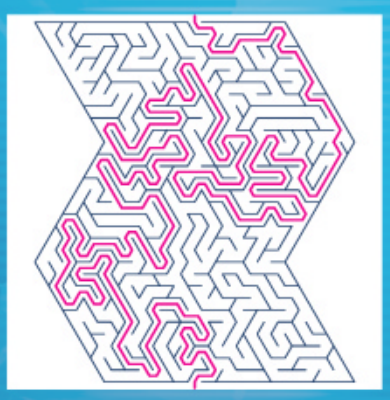
ANSWERS

"Find the Spy!"
(page 28): The museum

"Ancient Numbers"
(page 32):
D = 12
S = 3,100,000
N = 31,100
O = 400
B = 11,200
A = 211
P = 1,001,000
R = 40
Y = 211,001
O = 100,003
ANSWER: SPY ONBOARD

"Land of Ice and Snow"
(page 30):

"Cave Conundrum"
(page 31):



"Hidden Relics"
(page 33):

kids VS. PLASTIC

Part of the PLANET OR PLASTIC? initiative

MAKE THIS FABRIC LUNCH BAG TO AVOID THAT PLASTIC LUNCH BOX OR BAG

BY ELLA SCHWARTZ

TO-GO TOTE

Help keep the Earth healthy by ditching some plastic items. This month, make a reusable bag to carry your lunch so you can ditch plastic bags and boxes, which take up landfill space.

MATERIALS

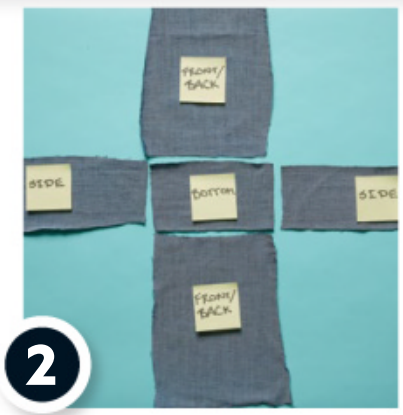
- Old pair of jeans*
- Ruler
- Scissors
- Hot-glue gun
- Decorations like pom-poms, pins, lace, and patches

*Select a pair that you don't wear anymore—and have permission to cut up!

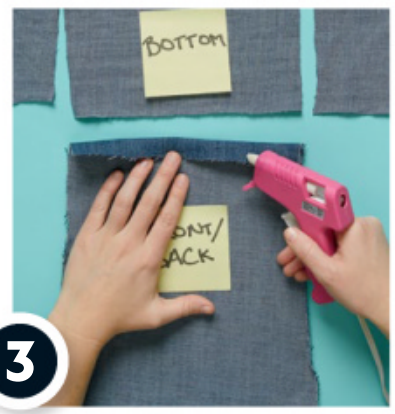
PLANET PROTECTOR TIP Pack a reusable water bottle and metal utensils in your new lunch bag.

STEPS

1 Measuring with the ruler, cut rectangles from the jeans in the following sizes: two pieces measuring 8 inches by 12 inches for the front and the back; two pieces measuring 4 inches by 12 inches for the two sides; one piece measuring 4 inches by 8 inches for the bottom.



2 Lay your rectangles on the table with the 4 by 8 piece in the middle, the 8 by 12 pieces on the top and bottom, and the 4 by 12 pieces on the sides.



3 Grab a parent and use the hot-glue gun to put a line of glue along the short edge of the front piece on the outside part of the jeans.

4 Press the glue edge to the outside part of the bottom piece, carefully aligning the edges.

5 Repeat steps 3 and 4 with all pieces along the bottom, then glue the side pieces to the front and back pieces.

6 Use more glue to seal any gaps along the bottom and edges. You should now have a sealed bag with four sides and a bottom.

Next cut two strips of fabric from the jeans, each measuring about 6 inches long and 1 inch wide.

7 Place a small dab of glue in the center of the front panel of the bag, about three inches from the top.

8 Press one strip at this point, facing up and down. Repeat on the opposite side of the bag with the other strip.

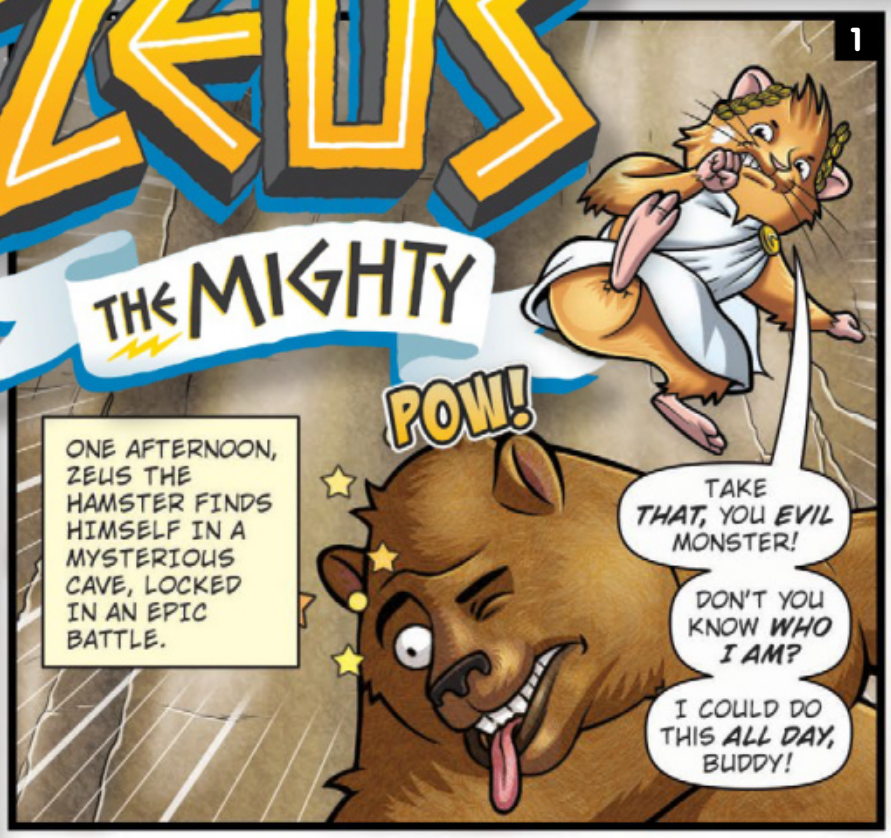
9 Decorate the outside of your lunch bag. Then to close it, roll the top of the bag down and tie the strips together.

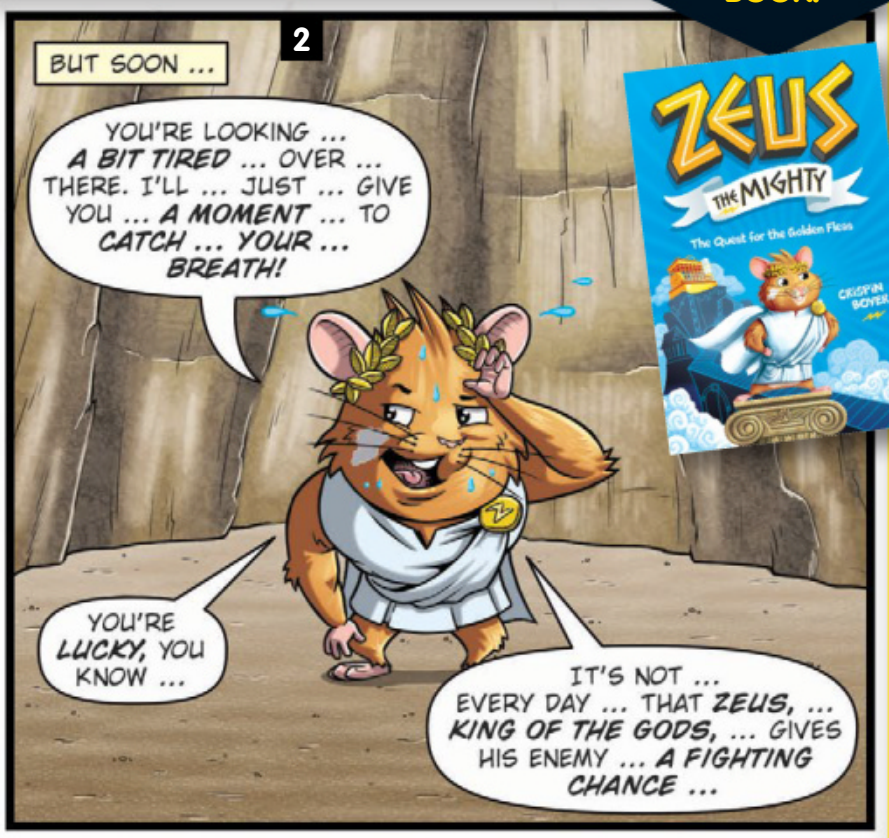
GET MORE CRAFTS TO REPLACE PLASTIC ITEMS.
Then find out how to reduce plastic from your back-to-school routine.
natgeokids.com/KidsVsPlastic

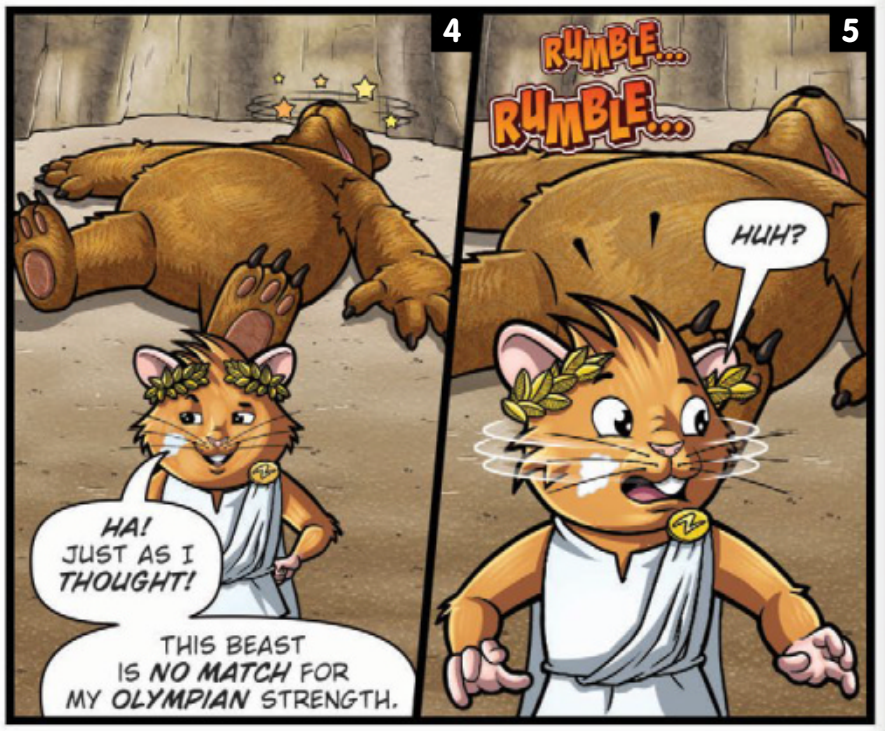
REBECCA HALE AND MARK THIESSEN / NG STAFF (LUNCH BAG, ALL); JANE KELLY / SHUTTERSTOCK (GLOBE)

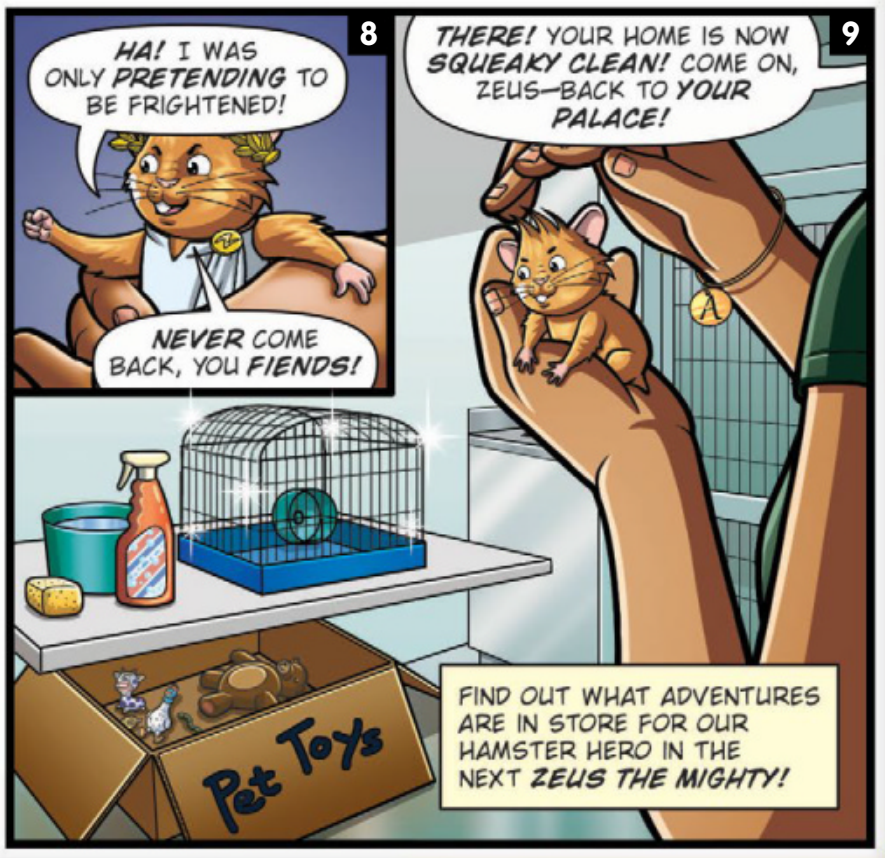
ZEUS THE MIGHTY

CHECK OUT THE BOOK!


1
ONE AFTERNOON, ZEUS THE HAMSTER FINDS HIMSELF IN A MYSTERIOUS CAVE, LOCKED IN AN EPIC BATTLE.
POW!
TAKE THAT, YOU EVIL MONSTER!
DON'T YOU KNOW WHO I AM?
I COULD DO THIS ALL DAY, BUDDY!


2
BUT SOON ...
YOU'RE LOOKING ... A BIT TIRED ... OVER ... THERE. I'LL ... JUST ... GIVE YOU ... A MOMENT ... TO CATCH ... YOUR ... BREATH!
YOU'RE LUCKY, YOU KNOW ...
IT'S NOT ... EVERY DAY ... THAT ZEUS, ... KING OF THE GODS, ... GIVES HIS ENEMY ... A FIGHTING CHANCE ...
ZEUS THE MIGHTY
The Quest for the Golden Fleas
CRISPIN BOYER




8
HA! I WAS ONLY PRETENDING TO BE FRIGHTENED!
NEVER COME BACK, YOU FIENDS!
9
THERE! YOUR HOME IS NOW SQUEAKY CLEAN! COME ON, ZEUS—BACK TO YOUR PALACE!
Pet Toys
FIND OUT WHAT ADVENTURES ARE IN STORE FOR OUR HAMSTER HERO IN THE NEXT ZEUS THE MIGHTY!